

Message Text

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DEFENSE FOR ISA FOR TIMBERLAKE

E.O. L1652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MAAR, MASS, MILL, PARM, US, UK, NATO

SUBJ: EUROPEAN/US COOPERATION IN DEFENSE PROCUREMENT --

INCLUSION OF MASON/SECDEF LETTER IN QUARTERLY
REPORT TO CONGRESS

1. MACDONALD HAS NOW HEARD FROM J. MORAY STEWART, HEAD OF DS 12 (NATO SECTION) IN THE MOD, THAT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENSE MASON TOGETHER WITH HIS EUROGROUP COLLEAGUES AGREE THAT "IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT" TO PUBLISH THE TEXT OF MASON'S 9 MAY LETTER TO SECDEF WHICH MASON WROTE IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROGROUP.

2. THE EUROGROUP FELT THAT SECDEF IN HIS QUARTERLY REPORT TO CONGRESS BY ALL MEANS SHOULD MAKE REFERENCE, REPEAT REFERENCE, TO THE LETTER BUT THAT THE TEXT SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED NOR SHOULD VERBATIM QUOTES BE USED FROM IT. IT IS THE EUROGROUP'S FEELING THAT THE LETTER WAS A CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DEFENSE MINISTERS AND THAT IT IS THIS CONFIDENTIALITY WHICH ALLOWED MR. MASON TO WRITE WITH A DEGREE OF FRANKNESS WHICH THEY WOULD NOT WANT PREJUDICED BY PUBLICATION.

3. ALSO, THE BRITISH FEEL THAT A NUMBER OF POINTS MADE BY MASON IN THE 9 MAY LETTER REFLECTED "THE EARLY THOUGHT
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OF THE EUROGROUP" AND TO PUBLISH THESE THOUGHTS BEFORE

THEY ARE DEVELOPED FURTHER MIGHT LEAD TO PREMATURE CONSOLIDATION OF POSITIONS WHEN IN THEIR OPINION IT IS IN "ALL OUR INTERESTS THAT THEY SHOULD REMAIN FLUID SO AS NOT TO INHIBIT THE DEVELOPING DIALOGUE".

4. FINALLY, THE POINT WAS MADE THAT THE EUROGROUP, AND MR. MASON IN PARTICULAR, FELT IT WAS AN EXCELLENT IDEA THAT SECDEF SHOULD "GIVE SOME CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THE EUROPEAN DESIRE TO MAKE SUBSTANTIVE AND PRACTICAL PROGRESS IN THIS FIELD". THEY WOULD BE DELIGHTED, THEREFORE, FOR SECDEF TO GIVE FULL WEIGHT IN HIS REPORT TO THE EUROGROUP'S "INITIATIVE" ON FURTHERING EUROPEAN COOPERATION WITH THE US IN DEFENSE PROCUREMENT AND TO DEVELOPING A "TWO-WAY STREET ACROSS THE ATLANTIC IN THIS CONTEXT". THEY HOPE THAT ALL THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE ON THIS SUBJECT RECENTLY (E.G., THE COMMUNIQUE OF THE EUROGROUP MEETING ON 7 MAY AND THE DPC MEETING ON 22-23 MAY) CONTAIN ENOUGH INFORMATION.

RICHARDSON

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